

February 22, 2000

**APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS FOR HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE, REHABILITATION RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS, COOPERATIVE STUDIES PROGRAM CENTERS,  
AND EPIDEMIOLOGY RESEARCH AND INFORMATION CENTERS**

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive states current policy regarding the appointment of Directors for Health Services Research and Development (HSR&D) Centers of Excellence, Rehabilitation Research and Development (RR&D) Centers, Cooperative Studies Program (CSP) Centers, and Epidemiology Research and Information (ERI) Centers.

**2. BACKGROUND**

a. VHA's research program provides core support funds to peer-reviewed, scientifically meritorious HSR&D Centers of Excellence, RR&D, CSP, and ERI Centers to enhance their capacity to conduct relevant, high-quality research in selected areas of scientific inquiry. A key goal of VHA's Research and Development Program is the translation of useful findings from the laboratory into improved clinical practice. Therefore, the Center program project applicants are expected to incorporate appointment of VHA physician leadership as either the Director or the Deputy (or Associate Director). Office of Research and Development, or the appropriate Research Service, concurrence in the Center Director appointments has ensured that leaders have the appropriate skills to both lead an individual Center and participate effectively in national research Veterans Service Integrated Network (VISN) activities.

b. The Office of R&D requires that its key Center (HSR&D Centers of Excellence, RR&D, CSP, and ERI Centers) appoint physician leadership (Director, Deputy and/or Associate Director). Each facility is to conduct a national search for a proposed Center Director. Concurrence by the appropriate Headquarters R&D Service Director is required before the facility Director appoints the Center Director.

c. Funding is provided as a program project award to the Center Director (as Principal Investigator) for a specific period of time. Consistent with current policy, if a Principal Investigator (Center Director) leaves, the Office of R&D would prematurely terminate the award unless provisions are made for an appropriate replacement (based upon joint review of the facility and the appropriate R&D Service Director). Since these Center awards are provided to the Research and Development Center Director (Principal Investigator), ensuring appropriate recruitment and concurrence will avoid preliminary termination of such awards upon a Center Director's departure.

**3. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that concurrence is required by the Chief Research and Development Officer, or designee, in appointments for the position of Director for any HSR&D Center of Excellence, RR&D Center, CSP Center or ERI Center that receives, or expects to receive, Research and Development core support funds.

**THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES FEBRUARY 28, 2005**

#### **4. ACTION**

a. **Local Facility.** The local facility must:

(1) Nationally advertise, screen, interview, and identify a primary HSR&D Center of Excellence, RR&D, CSP, or ERI Center Director candidate.

(2) Articulate tentative commitment concerning salary, percent effort requirements, and tentative academic affiliate appointment.

(3) Obtain the applicant's tentative acceptance of terms and conditions and desire to continue with the recruitment process.

(4) Submit a letter from the medical center director through the VISN Director to the appropriate Service Director, with copy of applicant's vitae and request for concurrence in the selection. If the Service Director concurs tentatively with the selection, the local facility will:

(a) Schedule an interview in VHA Headquarters with the appropriate Service Director.

(b) Make travel arrangements for the candidate to travel to VHA Headquarters for the interview.

b. **VHA Headquarters Research and Development Office**

(1) The Chief R&D Officer designates concurrences to the Director, HSR&D Service, for Center of Excellence Director appointments; the Director, RR&D Service, for RR&D Center Director appointments; and the Director, CSP, for CSP and ERI Center appointments.

(2) The VHA Headquarters Service (HSR&D, RR&D, or CSP as appropriate) will:

(a) Provide funds for the candidate travel to VHA Headquarters for the interview.

(b) Review the candidate's qualifications and abilities to provide Center leadership.

(c) Interview the applicant.

(d) Respond with concurrence or concerns within 2 weeks following the interview.

**NOTE:** For further information, contact Shirley Meehan, M.B.A., Ph.D., or Mary Jones, M.B.A., 202 273-8287 (HSR&D) or Laura Bowman 202-408-3680 (RR&D), or Joe Gough 202-273-8248(CSP or ERI Center).

#### **5. REFERENCES:** None.

**6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** The Office of Research and Development (12) is responsible for the contents of this directive.

**7. RESCISSIONS:** None. This VHA Directive expires February 28, 2005.

S/ Melinda Murphy for  
Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Deputy Under Secretary for Health

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